The Civil War
The Battle Cry of Freedom

The South, Slavery, and the Civil War

- Remember: Southerners explicitly point to the defense of slavery as the reason for disunion.
- Most southerners assumed the war was, at least in part, to defend slavery and the racial order.
- As the war progressed, many became more committed to defending slavery.
  - The North moved towards emancipation.
  - The North used black troops.

The South and African-American Soldiers

- Southerners resented northern use of black troops beginning in 1862.
- The Confederate government refused to recognize black soldiers as POWs.
- Southern troops regularly massacred black prisoners.
  - Example: The Fort Pillow Massacre
- The Confederate government refused to consider using black troops until weeks before the end of the war.
  - Why?

A contemporary image of the Ft. Pillow Massacre

The POW Crisis

Andersonville, Prison Camp where around 13,000 Union soldiers died

The North, Slavery, and the Civil War

The Initial Northern War Goals

- What was the Union fighting for?
  - In the early years, the war aim of the North was the salvation of the Union.
    - To defend the Union was to defend freedom and democracy.
    - To oppose secession was to oppose anarchy.
    - Most northerners agreed the war was not to end slavery.
  - Many also saw the war as a necessary response to the South attacking first
  - From the beginning, a minority did see the war as being about

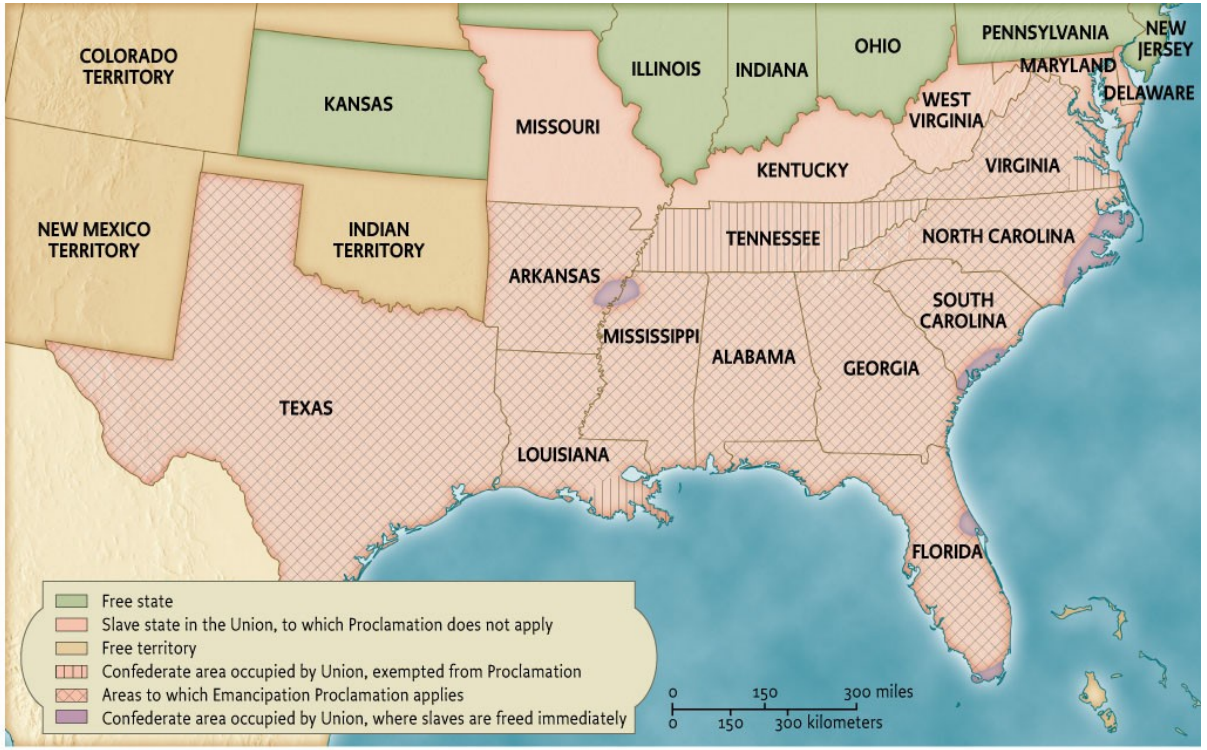
War Goals Expand

- By late 1862, the purpose of the war had expanded to include ending slavery in the Confederacy.

- Why had this happened?
  - The first year of the war was a failure.
  - Slaves could be valuable allies.
  - Public opinion in the North was changing.
  - The British needed to be stopped from intervening.

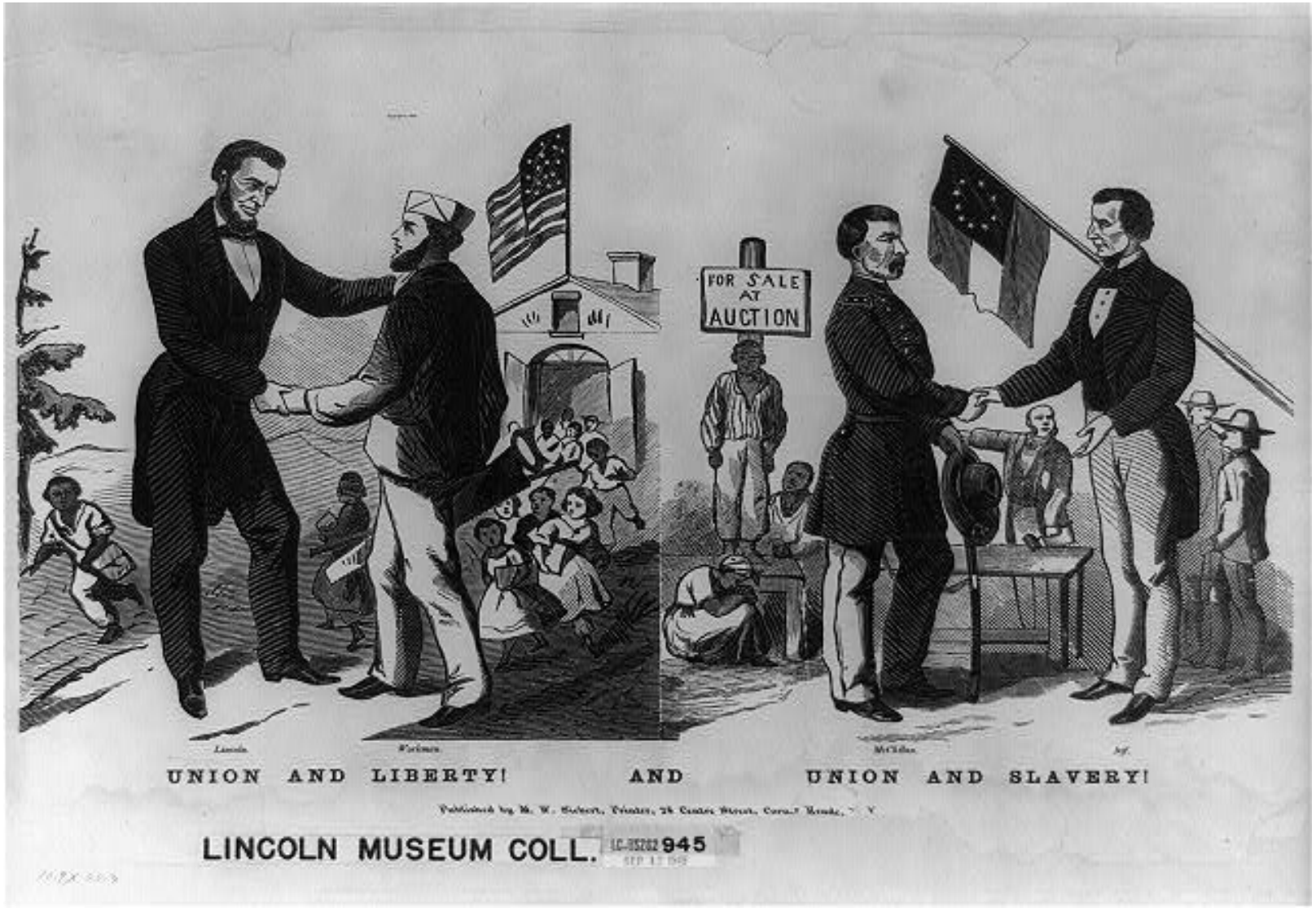
The Emancipation Proclamation

- By the summer of 1862, Lincoln had decided to emancipate the slaves in the South.
  - Victory at Antietam
- The Emancipation Proclamation
  - Justified as a war measure to degrade the economic underpinnings of the rebellion.
  - Declared that as of January 1, 1863 all slaves in areas still in rebellion would be freed.
  - Exempted the loyal border states and some areas of the South.
  - “Freed” roughly 3 million of America’s 4 million slaves.



The Radicalization of the Union Army

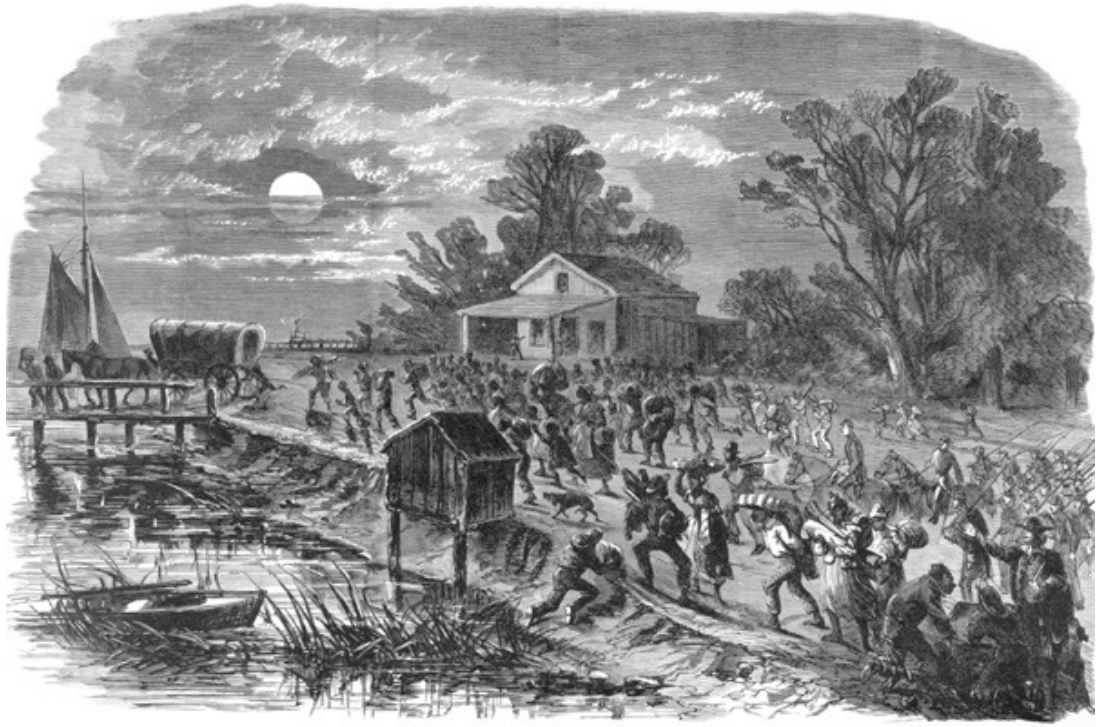
- At the beginning of the war, most in the Union Army agreed that saving the Union was the goal and anti-slavery was not.
- By the end, the Union Army was a Republican Army.
  - In 1864, Lincoln won 55% of the popular vote.
  - He received more than 70% of the vote of the army.
- By this time, the army was anti-slavery.
  - Slavery had to end if the war meant anything.
  - A large minority even believed black equality was necessary.
- Why?



Poster supporting Lincoln in the 1864 election

African-Americans and the Civil War

- Slaves “voted with their feet.”
  - Large numbers fled to Union armies.
  - This led to innovations in union policy towards slaves.
    - Early in the war, the Union army did not know what to do with runaways.
    - By the end of 1861, the Union had declared slaves “contraband of war,” meaning confiscated property.
- Slaves also helped Union forces.



Slaves Fleeing to Union forces in Virginia, 1861

African-American Soldiers

- African-American Soldiers
  - Challenged white racial assumptions.
  - Enlistments began in late 1862 after the provisional Emancipation Proclamation.
  - Around 200,000 African-Americans served in the Union army and navy.
- African-Americans saw service as a way to assert belonging and citizenship.

The 54th Massachusetts Regiment

- Not the first black regiment
- An abolitionist project
- Its soldiers and officers faced possible execution if captured
- Made famous anew by the movie *Glory*

William Harvey Carney with the Regimental Flag

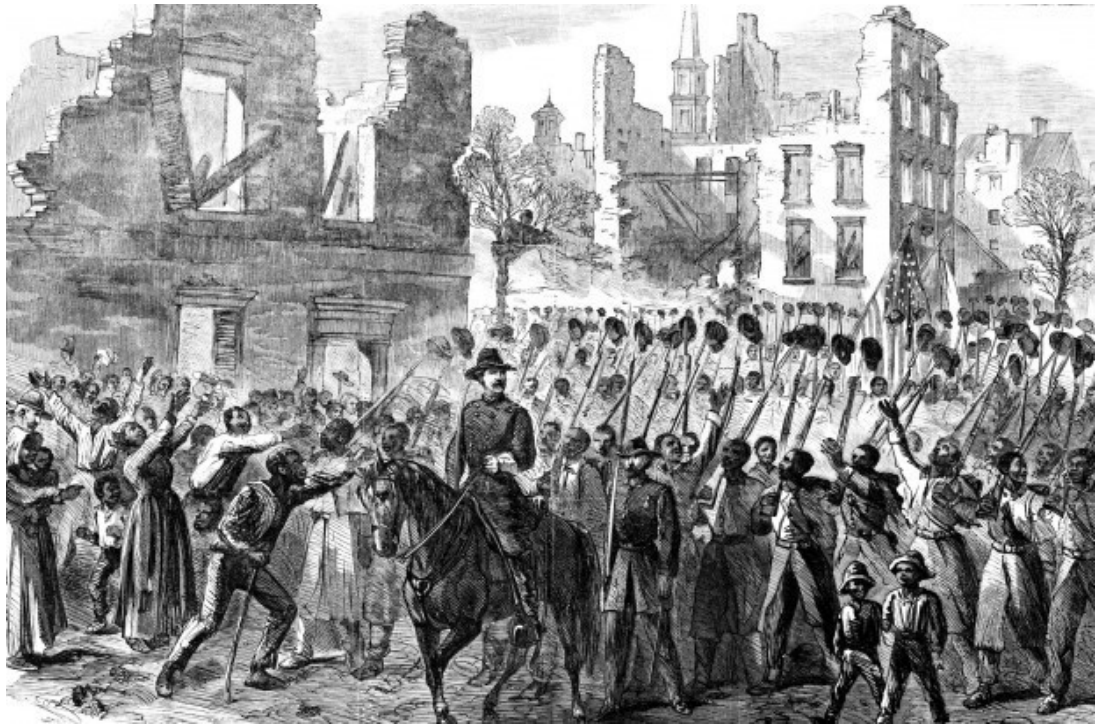
The 54th Massachusetts Regiment in Combat

- Sent to South Carolina in May of 1863
  - First used as laborers
  - First saw combat on July 16
- Defining moment the assault on Battery Wagner
  - Led an assault on the fort on July 18
  - Failed to take fort but showed great courage
  - Lost 272 men
  - Widely reported in the northern press with the role of the 54th' receiving positive treatment

Harper's Weekly, the Assault on Battery Wagner

The End of Slavery

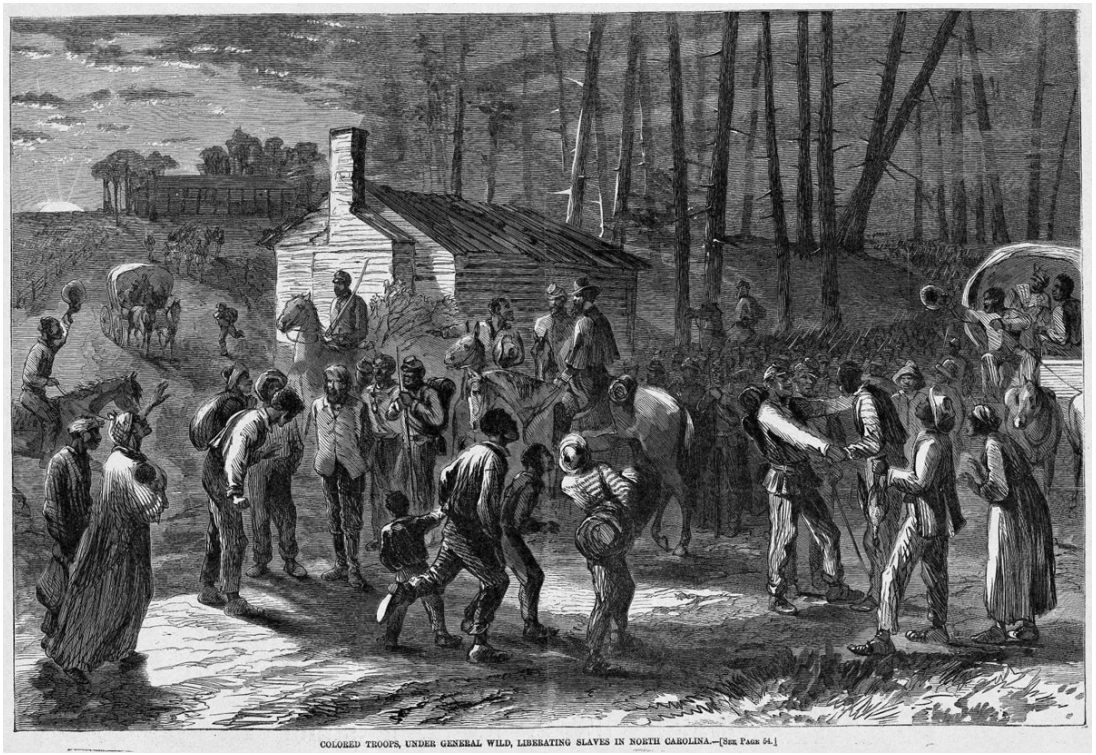
- By the end of the war, most northerners believed that slavery must end for the war was to have not been fought in vain.
  - They supported Lincoln's policy of ending slavery in the Confederacy.
  - Increasingly, they supported Lincoln's policy of ending slavery entirely.
- Wherever the union army went
  - It was followed by 1,000s of ex-slaves.
  - It enforced the Emancipation Proclamation.
  - It even illegally freed slaves in union states.



African-American Soldiers
enter
Charleston, 1865

The Jubilee

- With freedom, slaves
  - Demanded wages for their work.
  - Deserted their masters' plantations and farms.
  - Looted their masters' homes.
  - Searched for lost family members.
  - Joined the union army and navy.
  - Formed their own churches.
  - Etc.
- Slaves rarely attempted violent revenge.



Slaves being Freed,
North Carolina, 1864